

WASHINGTON  
DAILY NEWS

JUN 2 2 1966

# Not Very Clubby

By Marshall McNeil



It appeared to be such a nice, clean, uplifting job when the Senate leadership finally put together the new select Committee on Standards and Conduct last year.

But appearances change.

A group so evenly bi-partisan as to seem non-partisan was given the responsibility—and it really didn't seem too difficult a job at the time—of drafting a sort of Ten Commandments for senators: a set of rules and regulations to govern the conduct of both senators and their

employees.

After the Bobby Baker case there was general agreement the Senate should have a code of ethics. Eventually.

Then last January — Wham! Zowie! — came the case of Sen. Thomas Dodd (D., Conn.).

Allegations of misconduct were made against him in a widely published newspaper column.

No formal investigation was started for several weeks by chairman John Stennis (D., Miss.) and his co-chairman, Sen. Wallace Bennett (R., Utah). But the charges continued. Finally, last Feb. 23, Sen. Dodd himself asked the committee to investigate.

Suddenly the committee found itself knee-deep in the type of inquiry some members fervently hoped would never occur.

The committee opened its hearings Monday. It limited itself at the outset to what Sen. Stennis calls the "numerous, extensive, and complex charges" involving the relationship between the Connecticut senator and Julius Klein, owner of a Chicago public relations firm.

In Sen. Stennis' words, the complaint was:

"... That Sen. Dodd and Mr. Klein maintained a close

relationship; that Klein was in effect an agent of a foreign government and was not registered as such; that this fact was known to Sen. Dodd or should have been known and that for Sen. Dodd to continue this relationship under all the facts and circumstances controlling was an abuse of the senator's power, prerogatives and influence as a member of the U.S. Senate."

In beginning its chore, the committee, Sen. Stennis announced, would exclude as evidence some 4000 documents allegedly lifted from Sen. Dodd's files by a former employee. On these, in large part, the newspaper columns were based. Sen. Stennis said these documents were "sufficiently stigmatized so as to preclude their use as evidence." Sen. Bennett, who is not a lawyer, explained this was like excluding wire-tap testimony. Sen. Stennis subsequently "clarified" his statement by saying the committee would get all the documents on its own.

Among reporters standing watch in the locked committee room were some who voiced fears that the Dodd investigation from the very beginning has a faint smell of whitewash. But such a charge was unfair since no one, outside the room, could really know which way the investigation was heading.

Another phase of the Dodd case involves charges of misapplication of money raised at a political dinner. This is a charge that hits home at virtually every senator.

These are some of the reasons why what appeared, at the start, to be such a nice, clean, uplifting job now has become a very tough and unpleasant one — one that may never be finished.

One senator on the Stennis-Bennett committee confided to a friend:

"If I'd known there was a Dodd case coming up, I'd never have agreed to serve."